

## North West Counties Juniors

Minutes of meeting held 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2015 at Leigh Miners Welfare

**Roll Call** – Absent: Bank Quay, Heysham, Leigh Miners, Aspull New Springs, West Bank, Wrexham

In line with association rules all to be fined £10.

**1 Minutes of previous meeting** – (available on website) accepted as a true record.

**2 Matters arising** – (item 6 January 2015) Thanks to all those who had submitted logos for the website which hopefully will be updated for the start of the season.

### **3 Application to join NW Counties**

**3a) St Helens Wild boar. (Existing club now wanting to register junior section)** Representatives of the junior club provided information and answered questions pointing out that the junior club:

- hopes to register teams at u7, u9 and u10
- has five qualified coaches plus volunteers who have been recruiting children and providing training sessions for an average of 50 children (of which only 3 had been registered with another club) for several months
- had made links (based on advice received from St Helens District League ) with St Helens Wild Boars as this existing club had no junior section , however training/games/ etc. will not take place at the Wild Boars site
- training/games will take place at Moss Bank Playing Fields where arrangements have been made to ensure that facilities will be available on match days (possible improvements to site via joint working with other sports)
- aim is to provide opportunities for young people from the estate who might have problems with transport to other training venues
- volunteers will ensure fixtures honoured if accepted into the association

The representatives of St Helens Wild Boar juniors left the room whilst members considered the application.

Lengthy discussion took place with members making comments/raising concern about numerous issues including the:

- possible impact on existing junior clubs within the area
- refusal of St Helens district to accept new club called Car Mill Bears (which this group had been operating as) which had resulted in links with St Helens Wild Boars and thus change of name in the last few days after first application submitted was for Car Mill Bears contrary to the advice and instruction from the district league .
- Use of RFL logo by Car Mill Bears without permission giving a false impression.
- Problems with members of this group and Haresfinch and the efforts made by Haresfinch to resolve the issues
- need to encourage participation in the sport
- need to maintain and encourage existing members
- Question from the floor asking had the league not set a precedent ,using last season's move by Blackbrook Blues to Pilkington Recs as an example .The chair explained this was a different scenario as both clubs were existing members and both clubs were in agreement of the move .

A vote was taken on whether or not to accept St Helens Wild Boars into the association:

Those in favour of accepting the application 12

Those in favour of rejecting the application: 22

Abstentions: 8.

*In light of the results of the vote the representatives of St Helens Wild Boars were advised that there application had been rejected.*

**3b) Chester Gladiators:** it was noted that this new club will be presenting an application to join the association at the next meeting.

In response to questions raised regarding the area covered by the North West Counties association and travel for fixtures it was pointed out that every effort would be made to ensure that clubs do not have to travel too far on a regular basis and that the issue would be monitored.

#### **4 Primary Rules**

The Chair and Secretary reported back on the meeting with the RFL and other area representatives held on 13<sup>th</sup> January. . The Chair pointed out that he had:

- Advised the RFL of the feelings of members within the north west (see item 4, minutes of meeting held 6 January 2015) and their preference to play 7 x 7 with tackling
- Expressed disappointment regarding the lack of response to the report submitted in November 2014 by NW Counties
- Expressed unhappiness with changes made without full consultation i.e. kicking allowed despite Hull and NW Counties raising health and safety concerns.
- Been advised by David Gent that RFL would get back to the Chair and Secretary within 7 days of meeting (but nothing heard to date).

Since the meeting the RFL have updated website to show revised rules for next 3 years (for 2015 u7s) however these are confusing as there are contradictory comments/statements.

The SKY TRY event held earlier today had been attended by the Chair who was disappointed to find that the concerns of NW Counties had not been acknowledged and that those participating in the games today appeared confused.

4a) The RFL representative pointed out that all other areas had agreed and will be adopting the changes and that professional clubs will be using new rules when working in schools in order to promote the game. He said that when votes taken in January only NW Counties objected to the new rules. The Chair requested that he (the RFL rep) refer back to the RFL the issues raised with special mention being made regarding the lack of communication and the need for responses to specific issues (e.g. feedback and minutes of meetings).

Brief mention was made of the person given the task of promoting Primary Rules by the RFL.

4b) In response to questions raised it was pointed out that NW Counties had voted to adopt the 7 v 7 option as outlined previously and that in the absence of any communication from the RFL all clubs should adopt the following rules for u7s until told different:

- 7 x 7 with tackling (up to a maximum of 7 children per side with coaches liaising to agree most appropriate number for children participating in the game)
- 4 x 10mins playing
- All children to play a minimum of 20 minutes
- Coaches on field

*Agreed that this be adopted for the 2015 season (vote taken – 37 in favour, no objections and no abstentions\*)*

It was noted that sanctions might be imposed by the RFL.

## **5 Fixtures**

Fixtures have been delayed due to late applications however they will be made available weekend of 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> February. All were advised that

- First games to be played 8<sup>th</sup> March.
- No games on Bank holidays.
- Clubs wishing to arrange a game on the 1<sup>st</sup> March or over bank holidays may do so subject to contacting Chair to seek permission.
- Summer break 19<sup>th</sup> July to 7<sup>th</sup> September. It was suggested that any festivals be arranged in this period.
- 6 weeks' notice required for festivals
- Clubs can be flexible i.e. arrange evening games in order to honour fixtures
- Groupings within age groups – please contact Chair if you feel it necessary once fixture groupings provided

**5a) Under 12s.** All were reminded that it is important to contact 'appointed referee' as soon as possible to confirm details of forthcoming game as delay can result in referee making alternative arrangements. Clubs should contact Mick for list of Referees. The Referees fees are to be split between clubs participating in game.

## **6 Team Sheets and Monitoring of Child Focused match day experience**

In order to assist with the evaluation of the match day experience and bearing in mind the importance of the Respect campaign, team sheets have been amended to allow for monitoring of the match day experience. All were asked to be honest and realistic when completing the monitoring section of the form. Any general comments can be made on the reverse of the form. Hopefully this will help achieve the aim of improving the match day experience for all concerned.

## **7 AOB**

Sharing of information

Members were advised that a new forum had been initiated and that there is a need to re-register. Information can be obtained/shared via the twitter account and forum.

Mick can be contacted via email if information required not available from other sources.

## **8 Winner of monthly draw** Accrington

Chair thanked the delegates for their patience and understanding during this unusual lengthy meeting.

**Next Meeting: Tues 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2015 20.30 at Leigh Miners Welfare Institute .**